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FIRST MEETING OF THE HISTORY ADVISORY BOARD

DCI Conference Room

10 a.m., Wednesday, 15 December 1982

Present: [redacted] Chairman
Harry E. Fitzwater (DDA), Member
Robert M. Gates (DDI), Member
Evan Hineman (DDS&T), Member
John H. Stein (DDO), Member
J. Kenneth McDonald (C/DCI/HS),
Executive Secretary of the Board

Also Present: John A. Bross, Special Advisor to the DCI
[redacted] Executive Secretary of CIA

1. The Board convened at 10 a.m. with [redacted] in the chair. The Chairman first noted that the Board had been established by HN 1-193 of 2 December 1982 (copy attached) to be responsible for approving new historical studies and for reviewing and deciding upon the circulation of histories as they are completed. The agenda for this first meeting had been circulated in advance (copy attached).

2. Congress Study. The Executive Secretary of the Board, Mr. McDonald, presented the first item on the agenda, the proposal for a monographic study on "Congress and the CIA," for which a prospectus by staff historian [redacted] had been circulated to the Board with the agenda. Noting that usefulness to senior management was his principal criterion in selecting topics for monographic treatment, Mr. McDonald suggested that no subject was more important to the Agency's work and future than our relations with Congress. [redacted] study is designed to be about 200-300 typescript pages in length, at the SECRET level, and ready for review by October 1983. In the discussion that followed, [redacted] supported the proposal and expressed his own view that the present state of the Agency's relations with the Congressional oversight committees leaves a great deal of room for improvement. Messrs. Stein and Fitzwater raised the question of whether it would be wise to produce such a study which might reopen old wounds of the 1970's investigations and antagonize Congress once it got access to it, as they felt confident Congress would. Although sharing this concern about the possible political sensitivity of the study, Mr. Hineman favored proceeding with the project. Mr. Bross, observing that the Department of State's Historian has a staff of nearly 50, suggested that if we do not write the history of the Agency's role in

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national policy someone else will, and not necessarily in the light that we see it. Speaking last, Mr. Gates weighed in heavily in favor of the proposed study. Noting that his own Directorate daily produces papers that displease some officials and bodies in Government, he strongly opposed any suggestion that the Agency should avoid undertaking otherwise useful studies simply because they might provoke disagreement in some quarter. He reminded members that the Board would have an opportunity to review the study at its completion, and suggested that once the work is completed and approved we should on our own initiative provide copies to Congress, or at least to the oversight committees. Mr. Gates also suggested that when completed this study should be made required reading for officers in mid-career training, since he finds widespread ignorance in the Agency of how both Congress and the Executive Branch work. At the conclusion of this discussion the Board approved the proposed study without dissent.

3. Overhead Reconnaissance Study. The second agenda item was the History Staff's request for guidance on the feasibility of undertaking a historical study of CIA's role in overhead reconnaissance. [redacted] introduced the proposal by noting that the History Staff had a DDS&T officer on rotational assignment available to do this project, and that the idea of the study was not simply to chronicle systems and programs, but to chart and assess their effects on the Agency's business. After Mr. Hineman had spoken in support of the project, the rest of the Board agreed and approved the proposed study without dissent. Mr. McDonald undertook to coordinate closely with Mr. Hineman and his Directorate in pursuing this project. STAT

4. DCI Studies. The third item of business was a report from Mr. McDonald on the History Staff's DCI studies. Three studies, for DCIs Helms, Schlesinger and Colby, are now underway, and should be completed in 1983. Mr. Casey has recently asked the History Staff to organize similar studies in this series for DCIs McCone, Raborn, Bush and Turner. The Board was of the opinion that while it is probably too early to write objective DCI studies on the tenures of Vice President Bush and Admiral Turner, the History Staff should press on now to interview both men and their principal assistants, and to collect data for later use in these two projected studies.

5. Access to Records. On the final agenda item, concerning access to Agency records, Mr. McDonald explained that the work on several studies has reached the stage where requests for documents will become more frequent. Headquarters [redacted] copy attached) grants the History Staff "access to all Agency records and personnel, subject to the approval of the Deputy Director or Head of Independent Office concerned," with the provision that the History Staff may appeal a refusal STAT

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to the DCI. Mr. Fitzwater suggested that the best procedure would be for the History Staff to send its requests for documents to the Records Management Officer for the Directorate or Independent Office holding the required records. Mr. McDonald agreed that the History Staff's document request form (copy attached) would be so directed.

6. There being no further business, the Board adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

/s/

J. Kenneth McDonald
Executive Secretary

Attachments: 4
[redacted] 2 December 1982 STAT
Agenda for History Advisory Board Meeting
[redacted] 25 January 1982 STAT
Document Request Form

APPROVED:

[redacted] STAT

11 JAN 1983

Date

C/DCI/HS:JKMcDONALD:hj [redacted] STAT
4 January 1983

Distribution:
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